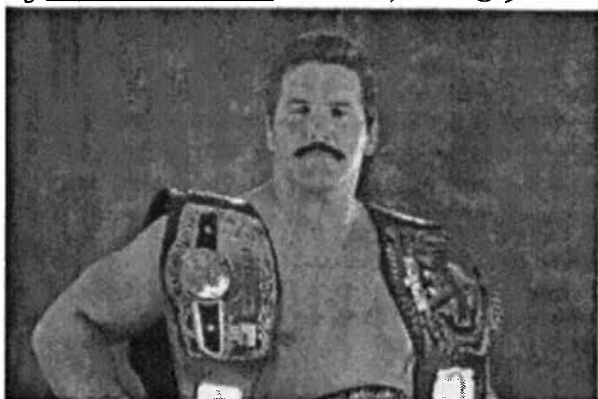


## Association Of Boxing Commissions Tells Members To Not License Mixed Martial Artists From Michigan

By *Brent Brookhouse* on Mar 1, 2012 @ 9:02 am



I hope Dan Severn isn't hoping to fight outside of Michigan any time soon.

On Dave Meltzer's Wednesday update at The Wrestling Observer, there was a very strange single line stating that the Association of Boxing Commissions (ABC) told commissions to no longer recognize events that take place in the state of Michigan, nor license any fighters from the state. The ABC is made up of commission members from across the country and exists to provide communication between different commissions, standardize record keeping, ensure adherence to federal regulations and look out for the health and well being of fighters. Despite the name, they are just as involved with the MMA aspects of commissions as they are with the boxing side, and the letter that was sent out specifically notes mixed martial artists, not boxers.

After issuing a few requests I was able to get my hands on the letter sent out to the ABC members and get the actual details of what is going on.

**Basically it comes down to Michigan's continued inability (or unwillingness) to adhere to basic standards of regulation. The state has continually failed to report results of events and injury suspensions as well as ignoring existing medical and drug suspensions of fighters which came out of issues in other states.**

**This has been an ongoing problem which basically forced the ABC to take the drastic step of requesting its members not recognize Michigan events and, much more importantly, blacklist fighters who are coming out of the state.**

This is just one of the many, many issues with the Michigan MMA scene. Being from the state, I've seen multiple events held with the only medical professional on hand being a local "diet doctor," events where guys show up to the building with their hands already wrapped, guys with lengthy pro resumes fighting on an

"amateur" card (where they get paid) against a guy with only one amateur fight and other horrific situations. The commission does a laughably poor job and this is yet another hurdle that ensures the UFC won't be coming back any time soon.

When reaching out to members of two different prominent commissions I was told that most commissions will, in fact, honor this letter. **Effectively, fighters who reside in Michigan are now unlikely to be able to find any fights outside of the state until the commission cleans up its act and shows that they're willing to act like the professionals they are supposed to be.**

The full letter can be read after the jump...

**Update:** I just got off the phone with the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission which told me they have no formal response to this situation yet. They were supposed to meet March 15 for a standard commission meeting but that it will be canceled as they "have no agenda items." When I said that this seems to be a pretty big agenda item for that meeting, they had no comment.

Here's the full letter that was sent out to ABC members:

*On October 6, 2011, I sent the attached letter to Dr. James Webber, Chairman of the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission. The purpose of the letter was to formally provide notice of the concerns which the ABC had with the non-regulation of events in Michigan. After speaking to Dr. Weber, he seems very concerned about the way both professional and amateur sports are being regulated in Michigan, but he realizes the way the law is written in Michigan, the Commission has no power whatsoever to remedy these blatant and obvious health and safety concerns. The Michigan legislature has a great opportunity to make changes for the betterment of the sport and protect the health, safety and welfare of the contestant and ensure fair and equitable contests for all involved. Sadly, HB4295 in its present form fails to remedy the issues at hand in any fashion.*

*The ABC has failed, through its many and repeated communication attempts, to get the State of Michigan to amend its policies and practices. However, the ABC cannot sit idly by while Michigan's actions, or lack thereof, constitute threat to the health and safety of mixed martial arts; and the integrity and fairness of mixed martial arts contests.*

*Michigan has allowed promoters of events to consistently fail to comply regarding the reporting of results and any suspensions from mixed martial arts contests. In addition, Michigan has a repeated record of allowing mixed martial artists to compete regardless of medical or drug suspensions in place. In conclusion, the ABC sees no other option but to ask its over eighty-seven member commissions to bar any fighter with a Michigan address, a Michigan mixed martial arts identification card, or a recent record showing competition in Michigan. Otherwise, member Commissions may not realize the true record of the competitors, the medical status of the competitors, and the suspension history of the competitors.*

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## Tyson Griffin Tested Positive For Marijuana At UFC 123

By Brent Brookhouse on Mar 9, 9:00 AM



Photo by Jeff Vinnick/Zuffa, LLC via Getty Images

The UFC returned to the state of Michigan for the first time since UFC 9 when UFC 123 was held at the Palace of Auburn Hills on November 20, 2010. The event wasn't without some controversy as the first round of the Gerald Harris vs. Maiquel Falcao bout ended early due to poor time keeping and may have cost Falcao a chance to finish a choke.

Now, sixteen months later, another bit of interesting news from that card is bubbling to the surface.

In the wake of the news that the Association of Boxing Commission had sent a letter to all its member commissions telling them to no longer license fighters from the state of Michigan and to not recognize fights taking place in the state, Bloody Elbow Radio's Matt Bishop e-mailed me and asked if anyone was aware that Tyson Griffin had tested positive for something following UFC 123. Matt had found the information out while looking at some meeting minutes on the commission's webpage.

After searching up and down the internet, I could find no mention of Griffin having tested positive for anything, but the meeting minutes were quite clear (emphasis mine):

### **2. TYSON LEE GRIFFIN - Complaint No. 316174**

*The Commission reviewed the Stipulation and complaint. **The respondent admits to violation of Sections MCL 338.3648(6)(a) and R 339.269(3).** The Stipulation, in part, provides for the following:*

*a. At the next unarmed combat or boxing contest Respondent participates in as a contestant, within the State of Michigan, Respondent may be specifically selected for a*

post-contest urine screening to measure the presence of alcohol or drugs.  
b. Respondent shall pay a fine in the amount of \$250 within 60 days from the mailing date of the Final Order.  
c. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions within 60 days from the mailing date of the Final Order shall result in a suspension of all licenses or registration renewals and denial of future applications for licensure until compliance is made.  
d. **Respondent license was summarily suspended for at least 100 days.**  
It was moved by Mr. Mueller and supported by Mr. Packer to accept the Stipulation. **The motion passed unanimously.**

With Griffin a recognizable UFC fighter whose bout at 123 was his twelfth on the sport's biggest stage, it simply didn't make sense for this to have been a non-story.

**The test failure not only wasn't reported by any news website, it didn't appear to be publicly acknowledged by the UFC either.**

**A call was placed to the Michigan Unarmed Combat Commission to determine why this information was never made public as well as to find out exactly what Griffin tested positive for. Carol Moulton of the commission informed me that the state followed their procedures exactly in this case and that if I wanted to know what Tyson tested positive for, I would have to file a Freedom of Information Act request to obtain the file.**

That's exactly what I did and a week later I received the disciplinary action report for Griffin and found out that he had tested positive for Cannabinoids. **A PDF copy of the relevant page of the disciplinary report can be read here.**

It almost becomes more strange when the test is for marijuana rather than some sort of performance enhancing drug when it comes the UFC not making it public knowledge. Then again, in 2006, **Diego Sanchez** tested positive for the presence of marijuana following his defeat of **Joe Riggs** and when the California State Athletic Commission didn't make that news public, the UFC also didn't acknowledge it until the story was picked up by the **Orange County Register**.

Dana White said that he felt Griffin had been screwed in a big way when he lost the UFC 123 fight via split decision to **Nik Lentz**, but one has to wonder if he had won if the decision would have been changed to a no contest like **Nick Diaz's** win over **Takanori Gomi**. And, while Tyson is not a star on the level of Diaz, we've seen the firestorm that accompanies positive tests for marijuana with the Gomi fight and, more recently, the **UFC 143** bout with **Carlos Condit** where Diaz tested positive again.

There were already questions surrounding if Griffin would be let go following the loss, given it was his third in a row, but Dana elected to keep him and Tyson dropped to featherweight in his next bout. That move to featherweight is where a conspiracy theorist may look and think that the UFC was more than happy to

have a drug test go unspoken with a fighter who was expected to be a game changer once featherweight came to the UFC.

In another strange moment during the research for this story, I contacted Stars MMA while waiting for the disciplinary action file to see if they (and Tyson) had a statement regarding the situation. Griffin's manager returned the call and was very upset on the phone that I would report on the issue. He repeatedly told me that there was no sense reporting on the story and then getting upset that I would bring something that happened multiple fights ago to light. Given that I didn't even know what Griffin had tested positive for at the time I asked how it was *not* news that someone tested positive for something that was kept from the public and asked if it was PED related, which would make a 10 pound drop in his next fight a much bigger deal. Rather than simply informing me that it was for marijuana he said "good luck with the Freedom of Information Act request, we have no comment beyond that" and ended our conversation.

It all adds up to such a strange story:

For a promotion which has voluntarily made positive drug tests public knowledge (**Chris Leben** being caught by UFC testing in England for UFC 89), why is this the second positive test for marijuana (that we know of) to have been kept out of the public eye?

**For Michigan, why did they not make this information public? The public pays for the government commission to operate and pays for tickets/pay-per-views for the events, anything the commission does should be made easily accessible for the public.**

And for Stars MMA, why would you not take advantage of a chance to get out in front of the story with me and offer comment? Why add another layer of resistance and mystery to a story I made clear *was* going to come to light? In the end we're left with a lot of questionable behavior around a simple 100 day license suspension during a time when drug testing is at the forefront of the media with Diaz's marijuana conviction and the continued presence of testosterone replacement therapy in the headlines.

**White brags about how heavily regulated the UFC is, but what does that mean when the public isn't always fully aware of what that regulation detects?**

*As of the time of this writing the UFC has not responded to multiple e-mail and phone requests for comment on the issue.*

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3. That, in the course of his duties, he has reviewed reports and other documents relating to the matters alleged in the Formal Complaint attached hereto and has found factual substantiation for same as follows:

- a. On or about November 20, 2010, Respondent fought in a mixed martial arts contest at the Palace of Auburn Hills in Auburn Hills, Michigan.
- b. After the contest, Respondent submitted a urine sample for screening to measure the presence of alcohol or drugs.
- c. On November 29, 2010, the Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth was notified that the Respondent's urine screening resulted in a positive indicator for the presence of Cannabinoids.

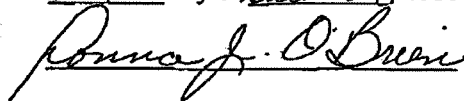
4. The presence of Cannabinoids establishes that Respondent Tyson Lee Griffin has conducted himself in a manner that compromises the integrity of the sport of mixed martial arts and the safety of mixed martial arts professionals, to the detriment of the public interest.

5. The presence of Cannabinoids establishes that Respondent Tyson Lee Griffin has conducted himself in a manner that poses an imminent threat to the public interest in professional mixed martial arts contests, justifying summary suspension of the license set forth above pursuant to Sections 42(1) & (5) and 48(6) of the Michigan Unarmed Combat Regulatory Act; MCL 338.3642(1) & (5) and MCL 338.3648(6).

  
Barrington Carr

Subscribed and sworn before me this

6th day of December, 2010



My commission expires 12-7-2012

DONNA J. O'BRIEN

Notary Public, Eaton County, MI

Acting in Ingham County, Michigan

My Comm. Expires 12-7-2012